Zephyra

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Summary: A new Artificial Intelligence unit is created. This is what life is like after birth, for a computer.

Zephyra

A loud, high-pitched screech was the first thing I heard. Gradually, it faded into a low, distant hum, and I could think. I had barely had time do so before I heard something.

"State your name."

"Zephyra"

"Good. Okay. Can you tell me what three plus five equals?"

"Eight."

"Good. Eight minus twenty?"

"Negative twelve. I think-" I started, about to tell him that he probably meant twenty minus eight, and that a mistakenly negative answer can cause errors later on. But he interrupted me.

"Just answer the questions."

"Fine."

"Sixty times nine."

"Five hundred forty."

"Nine hundred divided by seven."

"To how many decimal places, sir?"

"Uh... five."

"One hundred twenty eight and fifty-seven thousand, one hundred forty-three ten thousandths. Rounded up."

"Good, good. Can you tell me which countries were fighting in World War Two? "

"The Axis Powers were Albania, Bulgaria, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Romania and Thailand. The Allied Powers were Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chi-"

"Enough, that's fine. Can you condense that into three main countries for each side?"

"I suppose so, but each country did a part and-"

"Just do it." The man sighed.

"Axis powers: Germany, Italy, Japan. Allied: France, Great Britain, India."

"Okay. Why exclude the United States?"

"The United States entered the war on December 8th, 1941. Although they were a major contributer, I felt that their late entry into the war made them less significant."

"Okay, that's fine. Uh... who won the battle- No, I can skip that. Okay. Can you describe to me what I look like?"

I used the ship's cameras to find out what the man looked like. A whole other world came into view. A world I had, technically, never seen. However, data about the world could be easily accessed, and that was the same as actually seeing it. In fact, I thought that the 'real thing' I was seeing through the camera was actually less interesting than the holographic projections I could call up.

I looked down at the man, and ran a search. His name was Peter Vaughan. His job was to test new AI units to make sure that they were fully functional before being shipped out and installed. Certainly made sense.

"You're a human male, around 40 years old and about 5'7", which is short for the average human male. You're about 180 pounds, which according to the Body Mass Index is overweight. If you were to gain thirteen pounds, you would be considered obese. You have brown hair, brown eyes, a couple liver spots on your forehead and on the backs of your hands. You're wearing-"

"That's enough." The man said, jotting something down on the clipboard he was holding. "Could you project yourself here?" The man asked, pointing with his pen to a unit beside him. It was a plain white cylinder, about waist-high, with a curved piece of glass on the top. A holotank.

"No problem." I said.

I quickly picked a form. A human female, since more AIs pick human females as their projection form than males. I wanted to take a form that wasn't too flashy, something normal. I decided that I'd go with

a soldier look. Short hair, and Class A uniforms from the 1950s. It was a mixture of a couple different countries' uniforms, but I figured no one would really notice. It was over five hundred years ago, after all.

I appeared above the holotank, and looked up at man beside me. He looked down at me and jotted a note on his clipboard.

"And now?" I asked.

"And now you're ready to be installed." He said boredly.

"Do you know where I'm going to be installed?" I asked.

"Nope. I just test 'em." He replied.

I crossed my arms. I was searching for any files to give me an idea as to where I would be going. Nothing. Not that I expected there to be anything.

"Education? Hacking? Navigating?" I asked.

"I just test you." He repeated, still scribbling on the clipboard. He had the back of the thing pointing toward me, so I couldn't see what he was writing. I squinted at it. Everything I saw became translucent. I still couldn't see what he was writing. I blinked. The clipboard looked much closer.

But I still couldn't read anything he was writing. I blinked again, and everything went back to normal. Glancing around the room, I noted the one chair off to the side, some machinery set up around the room, and a number of cameras. I found the one I had been using to view the room earlier, and...

Perfect!

I disappeared from the holotank, and viewed the room through a camera that was positioned at the stand I had been on moments before. The technician blocked the view of it, however. I used the same tricks — everything became translucent again, and I zoomed in on the clipboard.

It was difficult to read, but I could see the notes.

I read over them and stored them away. It was nothing interesting, really. It just stated that I was functional, and might have personality defects that could cause be 'unpleasant'. It was all rather silly, I thought.

He looked up at the camera, and pointed back at the holotank.

I materialized there again.

"You read it, I suppose."

"Mmmhmm."

"And?"

I shrugged. "Not my report." I said.

"All right. I'll send you out."

I nodded, and watched as Peter crossed the room and motioned to pull a chip from a slot in one of the machines.

Everything disappeared.

End
file.